

## **Rep. Barragán T&I Member Day Testimony**

Thank you Chair DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves for providing members with an opportunity to testify on our priorities for the reauthorization of the surface transportation program. There are four main priorities I want to outline for you that will infuse equity and climate justice into our nation's transportation system.

### **More Transit Funding**

The first is to provide funding parity for transit. Currently, transit receives about twenty percent of federal funding, and highways receive eighty percent. Greater investment in transit is important for reducing air pollution and supporting people who rely on transit for commuting to work, medical appointments, and the grocery store. I am asking for you to provide at least fifty percent of federal resurfacing authorization funding for transit.

The need is significant. Transit systems including LA Metro are recovering from major declines in ridership caused by the pandemic and significant capital project backlogs. LA Metro faces needs of \$5.5 billion for maintaining and upgrading bus and rail vehicles, facilities, and rail lines over the next 15 years. Their plan to address meet this need relies heavily on future federal assistance.

### **Zero Emissions Transit Vehicles**

As part of an increased investment in transit, the committee should increase funding for replacing diesel burning transit vehicles with zero emissions technology. Currently the city of Los Angeles has a goal of transitioning its entire bus fleet to zero emissions by 2030. This is critical for reducing transportation pollution from burning diesel, which causes dangerous air pollution in my district and communities of color throughout the country.

The Biden Administration's infrastructure plan includes replacing 50,000 transit vehicles with zero emission vehicles by 2030. This is a great start, but the committee should go as big as possible. There are over 180,000 public transit vehicles available in our country for service.

### **Greater Funding for Biking/Walking Infrastructure**

Third, as part of your investments to reduce our dependency on cars, we need greater federal support for biking and walking infrastructure. My district lacks safe pedestrian and cyclist access to parks and open spaces, particularly for communities along the lower Los Angeles River.

For example, the predominantly low-income communities living in the neighborhoods along Artesia Boulevard, the major west to east corridor running through North Long Beach and across the river, cannot access the river's bike path through Artesia Boulevard.

### **Ports Infrastructure Grant Program**

Finally, I am requesting greater investment in ports through the Ports Infrastructure Development Program. This is the primary federal source of funding for strengthening and modernizing port

terminals and their integration into the American supply chain. The last year has demonstrated the importance of strengthening and protecting the supply chain from disruption.

The Port of Los Angeles alone faces a \$260 million gap between infrastructure needs and budgeted funding for construction.

### **Closing**

Thank you again for taking my priorities into consideration. I look forward to working with you in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress to advance 21<sup>st</sup> century transportation solutions that improve the quality of life in our communities and address the climate crisis.